

Personajes fundamentales de nuestra historia (Key figures of our history)

Grupo de Arte Callejero + Historia Vulgar + Es-cultura Popular¹, Buenos Aires, May 2010.

CONFLICT

The official version of History talks about big heroes, some of them members of an elite. The history stays far away from common people: they feel they they don't belong to history and history doesn't belong to them. Most of them believe that history was made by “some selected special men” ignoring the fundamental role played by masses.

LOCAL CONTEXT

During the 200th anniversary of “May Revolution” (the beginning of Argentina's independence from spanish crown), Buenos Aires became a big celebration centre. People from many regions of the country arrived to the City to attend official festivities. The streets were taken by large crowds gathered at concerts and exhibitions.

GAC was working with Historia Vulgar (a politically independent group of historical researchers) and other activist groups, redefining notions of independence, heroes and multitude.

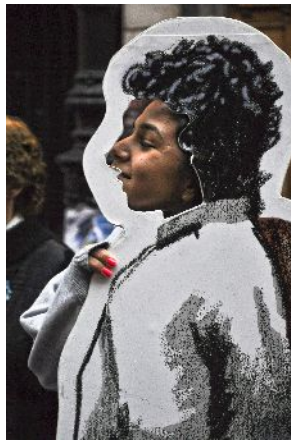


GOAL

To raise awareness of the importance of anonymous crowds in argentinian history, as they were present in each great event. Acknowledging that History is a collective issue.

“Without them (the “key figures”) the change would not hapanned. Without you, the social change is not possible. Be part of our own history, be the protagonist.”

1 “Collective of collectives” gathered at this specific project, the groups were working together over the course of a year.



STRATEGIES

Each board-figure was selected as an archetype of a relevant moment of argentinian past and present history. They were created from historical documents, eyewitness accounts and archival photographs. Some of that figures were real characters, others were invented. The hole in the figure's face invites the public to set his/her face and take a picture.

As a touristic circuit, this project transforms the street space into an interactive installation, allowing participants to choose those figures with which they feel identified, inducing to question themselves why they took that decision. Sometimes, it could be the gender, the social class, the ethnicity, or just the pose. After this happens, the “assistants” provide full historical information about the chosen character.



TACTICS/ TOOLS

Resignify the typical “face in hole” tourist advertisements, fully using the participative characteristics of the device



Body language:

Entire families and groups of friends wanted to be photographed. They all were part of the intervention with their bodies unconsciously performing different poses. The scale of the figures is relevant for the sense of multitude.

**Materials:**

The figure-boards are photographic prints stuck on a light recycled wood sheet, so they're easy to move from one place to another, and replicate the intervention overtime.



A small magazine with full information about the historic figures was distributed after each participant finished the action of taking pictures. The importance of the “face to face” communication is the key of this intervention. The efficacy does not mean massivity.

The image is an excuse to start a question, to provide or receive information, to be in contact with others...

